

ENDANGERED ORCAS
FIGHT FOR SALMON
Competition in Northeast Pacific. A3.

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MURDER CASE
Prosecutors won't seek death penalty. A3.

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HOCKEY
Crimson Bears split weekend series. B1.

Legislature to end special session today

Lawmakers will conclude 30-day stay without taxes but with criminal justice bill

By JAMES BROOKS
JUNEAU EMPIRE

There will be no grand ceremonies or speeches as the Alaska Legislature ends the fourth special session of the 30th Alaska Legislature today. In fact, most legislators won't even be in the capital city.

At 10 a.m., the Alaska House of Representatives is expected to follow the

example of the Alaska Senate, which quietly adjourned in a five-minute Saturday technical session. The only lawmakers present for that session were Sen. Dennis Egan, D-Juneau, and Senate President Pete Kelly, R-Fairbanks.

Lawmakers will end the session without progress on the effort to solve Alaska's \$2.7 billion annual budget deficit, but

they can put a significant criminal justice bill on their list of successes. Senate Bill 54 passed the Senate 11-8 Nov. 10 after passing the House 32-8 earlier in the session. The American Civil Liberties Union has vowed to sue over what it calls an unconstitutional provision in the bill. Gov. Bill Walker has said he will sign the bill despite the threat of lawsuit.

House lawmakers kept the session alive after the

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Rep. George Rauscher, R-Palmer, left, Colleen Sullivan-Leonard, R-Wasilla, center, and Rep. Jason Grenn, I-Anchorage, greet each other on the first day of the fourth Special Session of the 30th Alaska Legislature on Oct. 23.

MICHAEL PENN | JUNEAU EMPIRE

MEET THE ROBOT HOME



Sandy Frickey, left, talks about new assistive technology being used at home to help Frickey's daughter, Gina, be safe.

Assistive living technology helps disabled residents feel secure

By ALEX MCCARTHY
JUNEAU EMPIRE

The Frickey residence, located Out the Road, is in a picturesque spot. Snow-laden trees surround the house, the interior of which is bright, wood-paneled and decorated for the holidays.

Despite the beauty, it can be treacherous living out there, due to isolation and the bears that lurk around the property. For Gina Frickey, living in the house with her mother Sandy, cerebral palsy and memory issues made it even more dangerous.

"I would be getting up in the middle of the night, I would be trying to use the restroom and then falling down," Gina explained.



Gina Frickey, left, and Sabrina Cardinal, a service coordinator for REACH, talk about new assistive technology being used in Frickey's home to help her stay safe.

Gina, 39, would also sometimes forget to close the doors when she went outside, leaving the family's multitude of dogs and cats at risk of escaping — or allowing outside animals to come into the house.

A longtime client of REACH, Gina has thrived in a variety of realms, from being one of the early leaders of REACH's shredding program to producing pottery at The Canvas community art studio. But her struggles at home were frustrating both for her and Sandy.

A solution to their problems was all the way in North Carolina. A company called *Simply-Home* specializes in designing in-home systems that assist individuals with disabilities, and the Frickey house recently became the second residence in Alaska to have the system installed.

Motion sensors are installed above all the exterior doors, and in

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WEATHER

More snow coming

Weather Service forecasts 3-6 inches of extra flurries for next two days

By JAMES BROOKS
JUNEAU EMPIRE

Juneau won't have to dream of a white Thanksgiving. It'll soon be here, just like the ones it used to know.

The National Weather Service is forecasting another 3-6 inches of snowfall for the capital city, and this year will have the 25th snowy Thanksgiving since measurements began at the airport in 1937. It'll also be the third snowy Thanksgiving in a row at the airport, the city's official measuring point.

The number of snowy Thanksgivings was tabulated by Brian Brettschneider of the University of Alaska, using Weather Service data.

Snowfall totals are expected to be highest in the Mendenhall Valley and lower downtown and in Douglas and West Juneau.

Snowfall began Monday afternoon at the Empire's offices, and according to the Weather Service, it was expected to intensify throughout the night, with the heaviest snowfall expected this morning. The snow was expected to taper off this afternoon and evening, according to the Monday afternoon forecast discussion.

After a brief intermission, snow flurries are expected to resume Wednesday and Thursday morning before warmer air arrives and turns Black Friday into

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Analysts: Trump tweets could help prosecutors build obstruction case

Erin Kelly
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – President Trump’s Twitter habit may become a legal liability for him, as his latest tweets about the Russia investigation could help build a potential case against him for obstruction of justice or witness intimidation, legal experts say.

After news broke last month that George Papadopoulos, a former foreign policy adviser to the Trump campaign, revealed that he is cooperating with special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Trump tweeted that Papadopoulos is “a liar.”

Papadopoulos pleaded guilty to lying to FBI agents about his contacts during the campaign with a professor he believed “had substantial connections to Russian government officials,” according to court documents unsealed by Mueller. The professor offered Papadopoulos thousands of emails containing “dirt” on Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

Trump’s tweets about indictments in the Russia probe “could be used to further support a case against him for obstruction of justice,” said Barry Berke, a partner at the New York law firm of Kramer Levin Naftalis and Frankel.

Trump also tweeted that Mueller’s indictment of his former campaign manager, Paul Manafort, had nothing to do with his campaign and that Mueller should be going after Democrats instead. Mueller indicted Manafort and his associate Rick Gates on charges that they secretly worked on behalf of pro-Russian factions in Ukraine, laundered millions of dollars in profits through foreign bank accounts, and sought to cover up their work while they held senior roles in Trump’s campaign.

“To the extent the president’s tweets regarding the indictment of Manafort and Gates or the cooperation of Papadopoulos are knowingly false and intended to mislead investigators, influence the testimony of others or cover up what



From a legal standpoint, President Trump’s tweets are a disaster, says Jens David Ohlin, a Cornell Law School professor. BULLIT MARQUEZ/AP

actually occurred, that could support an obstruction of justice case,” Berke said.

Attorney John Dowd, one of several attorneys representing President Trump, responded via email with the single word: “Nonsense!”

A few tweets are unlikely to be enough for a prosecutor to charge someone with obstruction of justice, said Noah Bookbinder, the executive director of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington and the former chief counsel for criminal justice for the Senate Judiciary Committee.

“You’re not likely to get a charge because he (Trump) called somebody a liar in one instance,” Bookbinder said. “But the tweets form a pattern of conduct with the other actions he’s engaged in where it starts to look like he is trying to undermine this investigation in many different ways and potentially trying to pressure those who are running the investigation or cooperating with the investigation.”

Trump’s fondness for tweeting also could come back to haunt him if he tries to replace Attorney General Jeff Sessions or Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein with someone who will fire Mueller, said Jens David Ohlin, vice dean and professor of law at Cornell Law School.

N. Korea declared sponsor of terrorism

David Jackson
and Deirdre Shesgreen
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – President Trump declared Kim Jong Un’s government a state sponsor of terrorism as he sought to ratchet up the pressure on North Korea over its nuclear weapons program.

“The North Korean regime must be lawful. It must end its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile development and cease all support for international terrorism — which it is not doing,” Trump said during a Cabinet meeting at the White House.

In decrying Kim’s “murderous regime,” Trump cited the recent death of American citizen Otto Warmbier who was taken into custody in North Korea.

“In addition to threatening the world by nuclear devastation, North Korea has repeatedly supported acts of international terrorism, including assassinations on foreign soil,” Trump said.

Kim’s half-brother Kim Jong Nam, a political rival, was killed in a nerve agent attack at a Malaysia airport in February.

Trump made the announcement one week after returning from a trip to Asia, where he asked China and other countries in the region to tighten the financial and diplomatic vise on North Korea.

As part of that effort, Trump said his Treasury Department will announce on Tuesday additional economic sanctions on North Korea, and “it will be the highest level of sanctions by the time it’s finished over a two-week period.”

Trump said the terror declaration “should have happened a long time ago.” The United States did declare North Korea to be a state sponsor of terrorism from 1988 to 2008.

President George W. Bush’s administration took the country off the list in 2008 as part of an agreement with North Korea that failed to get the country to curb its nuclear weapons program.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said

the Trump administration still hopes diplomatic efforts will persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program.

In the meantime, Tillerson said, the United States will continue to impose sanctions and “continue to turn the pressure up on North Korea by getting other countries to join and take actions on their own.”

Last month, 12 senators — six Republicans and six Democrats — urged Tillerson to put North Korea back on the list of countries that the United States considers sponsors of terrorism. North Korea would join Iran, Sudan and Syria on the U.S. list of state sponsors of terror.

“It must end its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile development and cease all support for international terrorism.”

President Trump

Designating the rogue nation as a sponsor of terror would be a “diplomatic setback” for the country, Marc Thiessen, a former Bush aide and foreign policy expert, wrote in a recent op-ed arguing in favor of the move.

“The additional sanctions that come with a re-designation may not make much of a difference in North Korean’s behavior, but they are one piece of a larger strategy for isolating and squeezing the North Korean regime,” Thiessen wrote.

During 10 minutes of remarks at the start of his Cabinet meeting, Trump expressed optimism that Congress would pass a tax cut.

“Hopefully, that will be a great big, beautiful Christmas present,” Trump said.

He said the death of a U.S. Border Patrol agent demonstrated the need for a wall along the U.S.-Mexican border. “We’re going to have the wall as part of what we’re doing, we need it,” he said.

HOME:

Continued from Page A1

multiple locations in the house as well. The system was specifically designed to make for a safer environment when Gina gets up in the night to use the bathroom. There’s a pad on her bed that senses whether she’s in bed or not, which then communicates with other sensors around the house.

The motion sensor in the bathroom knows when Gina is out of bed, and calls Gina out by name if it senses she has fallen asleep or fallen in the bathroom. To add to that, Sandy gets alerts to her phone if Gina has been out of bed or immobile for a certain period of time.

These precautions have put both of them at ease.

“Safety-wise,” Sandy said, “things are a lot better.”

Representatives from REACH first met *SimplySafe* employees at an American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) conference, and talked back and forth with them for the ensuing months.

This February, *SimplyHome* representatives ended up coming up to Juneau to see what kind of distinctive challenges and situations people with disabilities were facing in town. *SimplyHome* Chief Development Officer Jason Ray was on that trip, and said he and his colleagues were immediately interested.

“REACH really wanted to be a pioneer and a leader in Alaska for finding new ways to support their individuals,” Ray said. “They really saw this as a good opportunity for them and we wanted to help them in that process.”

Juneau is currently the only city in the state with *SimplyHome*, and the company now has installations in more than 30 states. There are four residences in Juneau with systems in place, with the Frickeys’ house being the second. There are two more residences currently working with *SimplyHome* now, REACH Service Coordinator Sabrina Cardinal said.

The system, which is run through a large white box centrally located in the house, has been easy to operate. Sandy, a self-described non-techie, said she doesn’t touch the equipment much and that it’s worked well on its

own. Each system is catered to the specific residents, helping in areas such as cooking safety, bathing needs, sleep patterns, food access, medication safety and general independence.

The system cost a little more than \$3,000 at the Frickeys, in addition to a \$65 fee per month, but REACH does quite a bit in applying for grants and helping to fund the systems. REACH employee Henry Wyatt installs the systems, which saves about \$500 in installation fees.

Overall, the system has put Gina and Sandy more at ease. The five cats and two dogs (as well as neighbor dogs and grand-dogs) are less likely to go out of the house with motion sensors to remind Gina to close the door.

Most importantly, though, Gina feels safer and more secure in her home.

“I would recommend it to anybody and everybody who might need it,” Gina said, “because it’s an awesome thing to have.”

• Contact reporter Alex McCarthy at 523-2271 or alex.mccarthy@juneauempire.com.

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